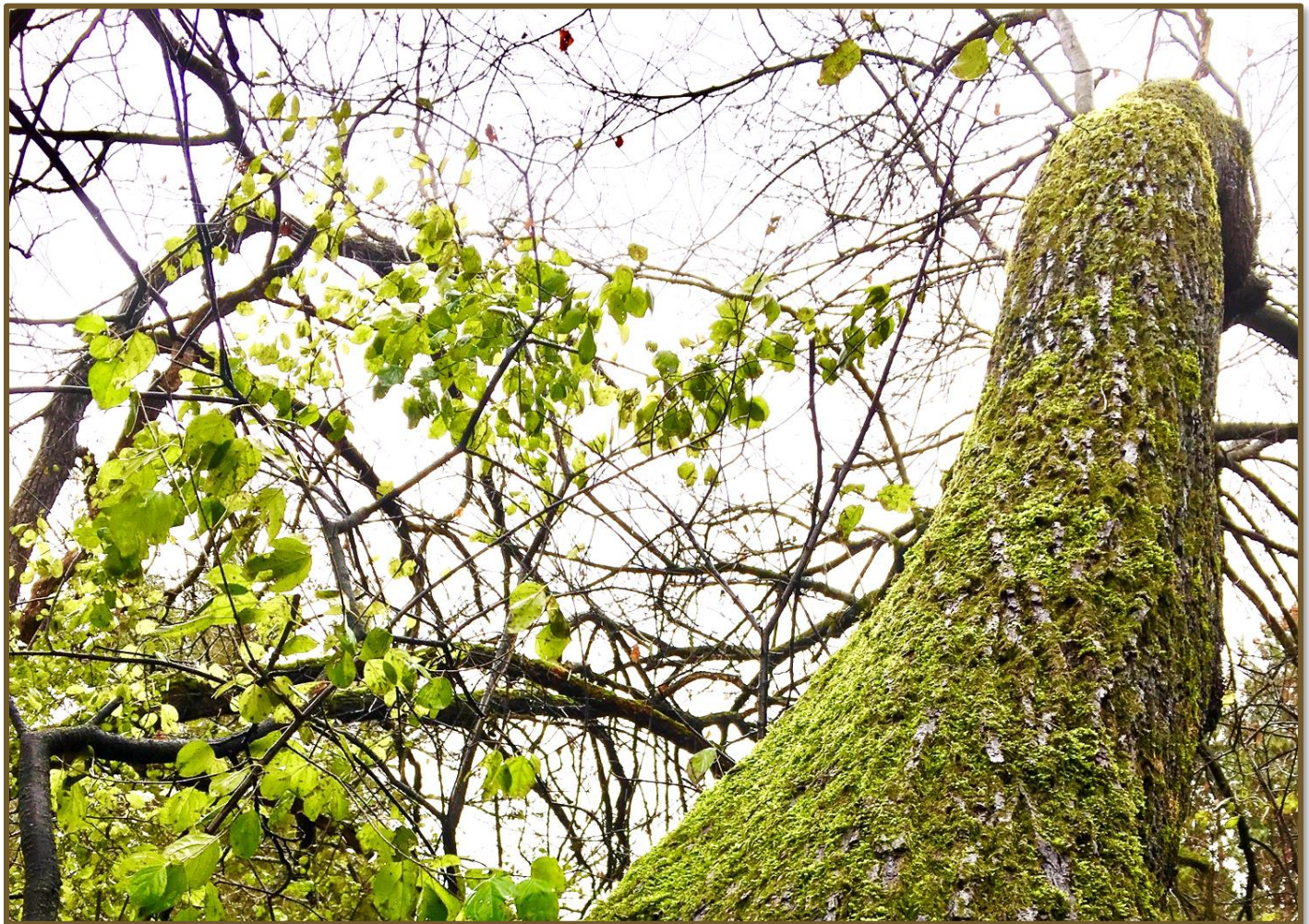


Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan



Proposed Master Plan and Environmental Analysis



February 2019
PUB-LF-113 (2018)

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Acquisition authority: The Legislature authorized the department to acquire and manage land for a variety of conservation and recreation purposes including state forests, parks, wildlife areas, fishery areas, recreation areas, trails, and natural areas (§23.09(2)(d), Wis. Stats.). In addition, the department is authorized to acquire and manage lands and facilities such as forest nurseries, experimental stations, fish hatcheries, and game farms, to support conservation and recreation properties. The Natural Resources Board approves the establishment of department properties for conservation and recreation purposes, which includes a formal name, a designation, an acreage goal and a project boundary (see below) – together these form the acquisition authority. . -approved name or authority (typically the name of a property) under which the department can acquire land.

Acreage goal: The number of acres the department is approved to acquire within a given project boundary.

Administrative Code: The set of rules promulgated by state agencies to interpret and enforce laws (statutes) passed by the Legislature. Rules promulgated by DNR are given the prefix ‘NR’ for ‘natural resource rule’.

All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV): As defined in §340.01(2g) Wis. Stats, a commercially designed and manufactured motor-driven device that has a weight, without fluids, of 900 pounds or less, has a width of 50 inches or less, is equipped with a seat designed to be straddled by the operator and travels on three or more low-pressure or non-pneumatic tires.

Amendment: See ‘Master Plan Amendment’.

Best Management Practice (BMP): An action, or combination of actions, that is determined to be an effective and practicable means of achieving a management objective.

Deed Acres: Acreage derived from DNR Land Record System based off the acquisition deed and described in the legal description. The acres described in a deed often differ by a small amount from the acres calculated using Geographic Information System (GIS) software. See “GIS acres” below.

Ecological Landscapes: Sixteen areas of Wisconsin with different ecological attributes and management opportunities that can be used to identify the best areas of the state to manage for different natural communities, habitats, aquatic features, and native plants and animals from an ecosystem management perspective. The boundaries are substantially based on the National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units developed by the U.S. Forest Service, with some subsections combined to produce a manageable number of units.

Ecosystem management: A system of planning, protecting, managing, and restoring ecosystem composition, structure, and function to ensure sustainability across a range of spatial and temporal scales and to provide desired ecological, economic, and social conditions and benefits.

Forest certification: Independent, third-party certification programs that verify that forest management meets strict standards for ecological, social, and economic sustainability. DNR lands are dual certified under Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) standards.

GIS acres: Acreage calculated from DNR spatial datasets using a Geographic Information System (GIS). When applied to DNR Managed Lands, there will usually be slight differences between GIS acres and deed acres due to different methods of collecting and recording parcel geometry.

Habitat classification: Generalizations of cover types from the Wisconsin Field Inventory & Reporting System (WisFIRS) used for property planning.

Handbook: A DNR guidance document that contains procedures, standards, instructions, and techniques on a specific, focused topic.



Land management classifications: Classifications authorized and described in ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code and are applied to a property or management area within a property to describe the general management objective for that area as determined during the master planning process. Land management classifications generally frame the types of land management and public use activities that will be pursued in each management area.

Manual Code: A DNR policy/procedure document. Manual Codes are established to communicate specific procedures that employees need to follow to comply with department policies or Administrative Codes.

Master Plan: A document that describes the authorized resource management, recreation management, and facility development that may take place on a DNR property. Master plans for DNR properties are developed according to the guidelines set forth in Chapter NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code and require approval by the Natural Resources Board. At heart, master plans are “instruction manuals” that describe the property’s vision, goals and objectives, the recreational uses and habitats that will be provided, and the management strategies and techniques that will be used.

Master Plan modifications: In some situations, conditions or opportunities change at properties that result in a need to modify master plans. Chapter NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code provides three methods to change master plans:

Master Plan Revision: A master plan revision process is pursued when there is a need to potentially change property-level goals or objectives. This degree of change nearly always leads to changes in the management purposes and objectives for much of or the entire property. Revisions must be approved by the Natural Resources Board.

Master Plan Amendment: An amendment process is used when proposed modifications include a change to the management objectives for one or a few management areas on a property, but not a change to the overall property’s goals or objectives. In these cases, there is usually a need to change one or more of the “land management classifications” assigned to management areas.

Amendments must be approved by the Natural Resources Board.

Master Plan Variance: A change in management activity or use described in a master plan that is consistent with the area’s land management classification and does not constitute a change in an objective for management or public use of the area as specified in the plan. That is, variances are used when the department seeks to achieve the objectives for a management area in a different or additional way. Examples could include using new habitat management techniques or adding a recreational use to an area. Variances do not entail a change to a property’s land management classifications nor its goals and objectives. A variance may be approved by the DNR Secretary or a Division Administrator.

Natural Community: An assemblage of different plant and animal species living together in a particular area, at a particular time, in a particular habitat, interacting with one another and with the abiotic environment around them, and subject to primarily natural disturbance regimes. Assemblages that are repeated across a landscape in an observable pattern constitute a community type. No two assemblages are exactly alike.

Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI): A methodology and database for collecting, characterizing, storing, and managing data on rare species, natural communities, and natural features throughout the state. Wisconsin’s NHI program is housed in DNR’s Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation.

Natural Resources Board (NRB): The 7-member citizen board that sets policy for the department and exercises authority and responsibility in accordance with governing state laws. The NRB approves all master plans as well as plan revisions and amendments.



NR 44: Chapter in the Wisconsin Administrative Code that authorizes, establishes, and describes the process for developing master plans for DNR properties.

Primary Site: Ecologically important site identified on a department property through a biotic inventory or assessment. Primary Sites are delineated because they encompass the best examples of: rare and representative natural communities; documented occurrences of rare species populations; and/or opportunities for ecological restoration or connections. These sites warrant high protection and/or restoration consideration during the development of property master plans.

Project boundary: Spatial representation of an area (e.g., a property) within which the department has authority to acquire land. A project boundary represents an area of acquisition authority.

Recreation Opportunities Analysis (ROA): A department study of existing outdoor-based recreation opportunities and future recreation needs around the state. The study identifies future needs for providing high-quality recreation experiences and the role of DNR properties in helping meet those needs. The final report can be viewed on the DNR website at dnr.wi.gov, keyword: ROA.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN): Wildlife species (including invertebrates, birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians) in Wisconsin that are in need of conservation action because they: are already listed as threatened or endangered; are at risk due to threats to their life history needs or habitats; are rare due to declining populations, abundance, and/or distribution; show declining trends in their habitats and populations. SGCN are identified in Wisconsin's Wildlife Action Plan.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): A report that periodically evaluates status, trends, demand, and needs for outdoor recreation throughout the state. The SCORP is a primary source of information on outdoor recreation in Wisconsin.

Statutory property designation: The official designation of a property (e.g., State Park, State Wildlife Area, State Forest, State Natural Area, etc.), authorized and defined in Wisconsin Statutes and Administrative Code, that describes what the primary purpose of the property is and, therefore, frames the general scope of land management and public use that can take place there.

Tension Zone: An area of transition between two distinct ecological zones. There is a pronounced tension zone in Wisconsin that runs from northwestern to southeastern Wisconsin, separating the northern forest (including the boreal element) from the southern forest and prairies. Many species reach the limits of their ranges in this zone.

Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV): A motor driven device, sometimes referred to as a "side-by-side" designed to be used primarily off-highway that has a net weight of less than 2,000 pounds, four or more low-pressure or non-pneumatic tires. Additionally, the vehicle must have a steering wheel, a tail light, a brake light, two headlights, a width of not more than 65 inches, and a roll bar or similar device designed to reduce the likelihood of injuries as the result of a rollover, all as originally manufactured in accordance with §23.33(1) (ng) Wis. Stats. Golf carts, low-speed vehicles, dune buggies, mini-trucks, homemade, tracked, or modified vehicles are not utility terrain vehicle.

Variance: See 'Master Plan Variance'.

Wildlife Action Plan (WAP): The comprehensive plan for the conservation of rare and declining species and their habitats in the state. The Wisconsin WAP identifies Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and lays out a strategy to conserve and sustain them and their habitats for future generations.

Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA): A state law designed to encourage informed decision-making by state agencies. WEPA requires state agencies to consider the effects of their policies, plans, programs, and actions on the



quality of the human environment. WEPA created Chapter 1.11, Wisconsin Statutes. DNR's WEPA responsibilities are further described in Chapter NR 150, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Wisconsin Field Inventory and Reporting System (WisFIRS): A database and web-based application used by DNR staff to store habitat data collected in the field, and to plan for and track vegetation management practices.

COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

ATV	All-terrain vehicle
BMP	Best Management Practices
CTH	County Highway
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
EL	Ecological Landscape
NHI	Natural Heritage Inventory
NR 44	Chapter NR 44, Wisconsin Administrative Code, Master Planning for Department Properties
NRB	Natural Resources Board
OHM	Off-highway motorcycle
PILT	Payment in lieu of taxes
SCORP	Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
SGCN	Species of Greatest Conservation Need
SNA	State Natural Area
STH	State Highway
UTV	Utility task vehicle
WisFIRS	Wisconsin Field Inventory and Reporting System
ROA	Recreation Opportunity Analysis



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Chapter 1 : Overview of Plan and Properties

PURPOSE AND MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

The purpose of this master plan is to guide management of department properties in the Northwest Lowlands region of Wisconsin. A master plan establishes the levels and types of public uses that are permitted on a property as well as the authorized resource management and facility development that will take place on it. All DNR properties are required to have a master plan (NR 1.60, Wisconsin Administrative Code). Master plans are developed according to guidelines set forth in Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter NR 44, which is known as the ‘master plan rule’. The DNR properties in this region will continue to provide high-quality natural resources, recreational experiences, and sustainable timber resources for present and future generations

This plan builds upon the substantial foundation laid by previous master plans, wildlife, parks and fisheries program guidance, biotic inventory work conducted over the last several decades. The planning process considers comments received during public meetings and public comment periods, including involvement of partner agencies and interest from local officials.

THE REGION: NORTHWEST LOWLANDS ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

The Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape encompasses portions of Douglas, Burnett, and Polk counties. Descriptions of natural resources, socio-economic characteristics and recreational resources for this region are provided in extensive detail in Chapter 16 of the Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin (WDNR, 2015a). All chapters of this reference compendium are accessible on the Wisconsin DNR website (dnr.wi.gov) keywords “Ecological Landscapes” then “Northwest Lowlands” A summary of the natural resources, socio-economic characteristics, and recreational resources of the Northwest Lowlands is provided in chapter three of this regional master plan.



Figure 1.1. The Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape, which serves as the basis for this planning region.

ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NORTHWEST LOWLANDS

The Northwest Lowlands is one of the few Wisconsin Ecological Landscapes with large areas of remote habitat. Aspen and young northern hardwoods cover almost two-thirds of the landscape. However, some of the forests have a significant component of fir and spruce with potential to manage as boreal-transition forest. This landscape contains a high prevalence of wet soils, organic soils, and lowland conifer forest, making the forests of the landscape prone to windfalls. Fire has historically been an uncommon disturbance, likely due to the abundant wetlands here, which serve as natural firebreaks.

The northern portion of the Northwest Lowlands features extensive forests and undisturbed wetlands that are largely unbroken by developments. Only a few major roads exist in this area. Maintenance of this large, contiguous

area of undeveloped forest is a major conservation opportunity. Opportunities also exist to restore and maintain older forest, increase structural attributes associated with older forests and identify high conservation value forests on public lands. Areas with potential to increase the diminished conifer component may also be identified; areas adjacent to existing stands of lowland conifers and muskeg might be especially good candidates.

The St. Croix River supports outstanding biodiversity, including numerous rare aquatic and terrestrial species. Maintaining an unbroken natural landscape and protecting stream corridors (e.g., the Spruce and Tamarack rivers) and the watersheds of streams that flow into the St. Croix River is important for maintaining the high-quality aquatic habitats, recreational opportunities and aesthetic values of this ecosystem. Several streams, including the Black and Amnicon rivers, originate in the Northwest Lowlands before flowing north to Lake Superior. These streams maintain important aquatic and shoreline habitats and are indicative of the high water quality within the Northwest Lowlands.

The large, intact peatlands of the region contain some of Wisconsin's best examples of peatland communities. Many sensitive species are dependent on these wetlands to provide suitable breeding and foraging habitat. Several of the large wetlands have been identified as high conservation priorities and merit the strongest protection possible. In addition, these wetlands are the headwater areas to some of the Northwest Lowlands most important streams.

RECREATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NORTHWEST LOWLANDS

The Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan contains few DNR properties. Owing to this, recreation on DNR-owned properties within the region is limited. These properties are also relatively small, which limits recreational options. Nevertheless, the region's properties do act as gateways to many of Wisconsin's cherished activities. State public access sites in the region give access to the region's waterways, opening the door to fishing, canoeing, kayaking, motorboating and other water-based activities. The small state habitat areas offer limited hunting opportunities and provide habitat to game species for hunters on surrounding public and private lands. State-owned islands are managed primarily for scenery, but also offer habitat, making them a draw to wildlife watchers and photographers alike.

Landscape Opportunities

- Upper St. Croix River corridor
- Stream headwaters
- Large, intact acid peatlands
- Remote areas
- Large contiguous county forests

TRIBAL RESOURCES ON CEDED TERRITORY

The Northwest Lowlands properties lie within the Ceded Territory of the state. The region is north of the St. Croix tribe and west of the Lac Courte Oreille, Bad River and Red Cliff tribes. Several tribes maintain off-reservation land trust lands within the Northwest Lowlands region.

Native American tribes are independent, sovereign nations, as they were prior to the arrival of Europeans in North America. The Ojibwa Tribes ceded lands in the northern one-third of Wisconsin to the United States government in the Treaties of 1837 and 1842. In those Treaties, they reserved their rights to hunt, trap, fish and gather within various publicly-owned lands. Treaty rights are currently being exercised and implemented by the Ojibwe Tribes within the Ceded Territory.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPERTIES

The Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan contains approximately 280 acres of department managed lands, the least amount of DNR property acreage of any of the 16 regional master plans. The properties consist of state public access sites, state habitat areas and state-owned islands. Although a large portion of Governor Knowles State Forest occurs within the region, the majority of its acreage is in the Northwest Sands landscape. Therefore, it is included in the Northwest Sands Regional Master Plan.

An overview of the Northwest Lowlands properties is provided in Table 1.1.

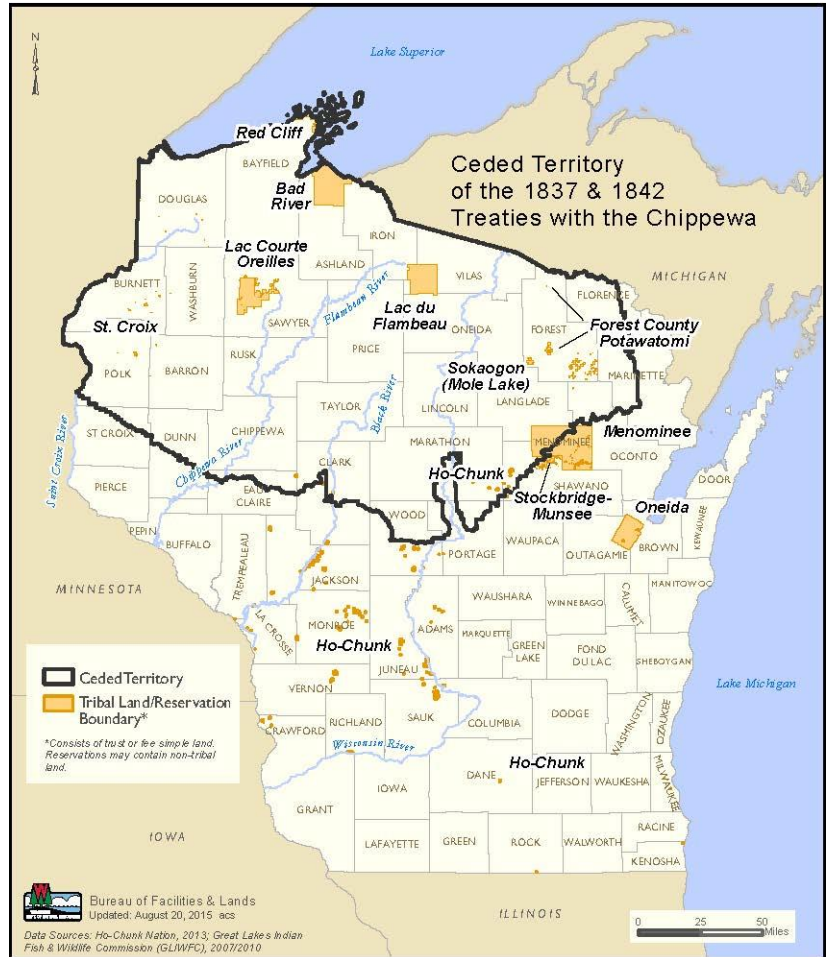


Figure 2. The Ceded Territory of the 1837 and 1842 Treaties.

Table 1.1. DNR Properties in the Northwest Lowlands

Property Name	County	Acreage*
<i>Alabama Lake State Habitat Area</i>	Polk	140
<i>Lake Nebagamom State Habitat Area</i>	Douglas	40
<i>Nimon Lake State Public Access</i>	Polk	5
<i>Round Lake State Habitat Area</i>	Burnett	24
<i>St. Croix River State Public Access**</i>	Burnett	15
<i>Trade Lake State Public Access</i>	Burnett	2
<i>Twin Lake Laketown State Public Access</i>	Polk	6
<i>State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Little McGraw Lake - Island No. 1</i>	Burnett	0.04
<i>State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Trade Lake - Island No. 1</i>	Burnett	0.30
<i>State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Trade Lake - Island No. 2</i>	Burnett	1.30
<i>State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Dollar Island</i>	Douglas	0.05
<i>State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Little Island</i>	Douglas	0.60
<i>State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Tomahawk Island</i>	Douglas	24.00
<i>State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Steele Lake - Island No. 1</i>	Douglas	1.50
<i>State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Steele Lake - Island No. 2</i>	Douglas	0.60
<i>State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 1</i>	Polk	0.70
<i>State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 2</i>	Polk	17.40
<i>State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 3</i>	Polk	0.30
<i>State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 4</i>	Polk	1.00

Italicized properties are shown in this table under their proposed name. See Table B.2 for a full listing of property redesignations.

**St. Croix River State Public Access is proposed to be redesignated to Governor Knowles State Forest in this plan. This will result in removal of the property from the Northwest Lowlands regional planning process. It is included in the Northwest Sands regional planning process.

Chapter 2 : Property Management, Development and Use

NORTHWEST LOWLANDS – VISION FOR THE PROPERTIES

The Northwest Lowlands are a vital contributor to the preservation of large intact peatlands and extensive working forests. Most of this landscape is owned by Douglas County, and it plays a key role in enhancing and protecting the unique water resources of the upper St. Croix River, a federally important recreation resource with oversight by the National Park Service. The department properties, while limited in scope, offer opportunities that include hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, wildlife watching, hiking and educational opportunities. This landscape is only a small part of an ecoregion that extends well into Minnesota -- providing cooperative opportunities for management with Minnesota DNR. Recreational opportunities on these properties and in this landscape, are supported in part by community, regional and government partnerships that support wildlife and sustainable habitat management for current and future generations.

GOALS

- Provide opportunities for hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering, wildlife viewing, scenic enjoyment, nature study and trail-based recreational uses that are compatible with the properties' capabilities, and regional habitat and recreation goals.
- Restore, manage and perpetuate the major natural community habitats that support an intact Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape, using principles of ecosystem management and sustainable forestry.
- Manage in ways that contribute to the protection and preservation of the Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters, wetlands, and lakes in this landscape.
- Maintain and enhance ecological connectivity between natural community habitats and, on a landscape scale, promote their sustainability in partnership with nearby town, county, state, federal and tribal land managers.
- Contribute to the local and regional economies through management of sustainable recreational opportunities, and sustainably produced forest products.

PROPERTIES OF THE NORTHWEST LOWLANDS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

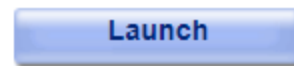
The properties of the Northwest Lowlands fall into three administrative classes: state public access sites, state habitat areas, and state-owned islands. Nineteen properties have new management described in this plan. No properties with pre-existing NR 44, Wis. Adm. Code compliant plans are incorporated into this plan. While portions of the Brule River State Forest and Governor Knowles State Forest do cross into the Northwest Lowlands, these properties and their existing NR 44 compliant plans are incorporated into the Northwest Sands Regional Master Plan.

MAPS

Property maps in this plan are found primarily housed in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer. Links to the five different map types (DNR and Other Lands, Recreation, Roads, Land Cover and Land Management Classification) can be found in Table A.1 and in many of the property sections. To access mapping data for properties without using the links in Table A.1 or the property section of this plan, follow these three steps:

1. Open the Property Planning Viewer

Visit the [Property Planning Viewer home page](#) and click the button.

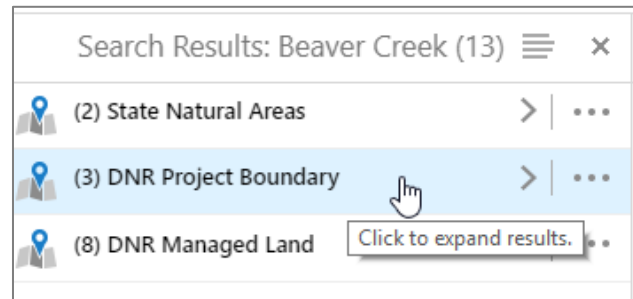


2. Locate the property you want to view

Enter the name of the property in the Search bar in the upper right corner of the viewer. Correct spelling is necessary, but entering the entire name is not necessary.

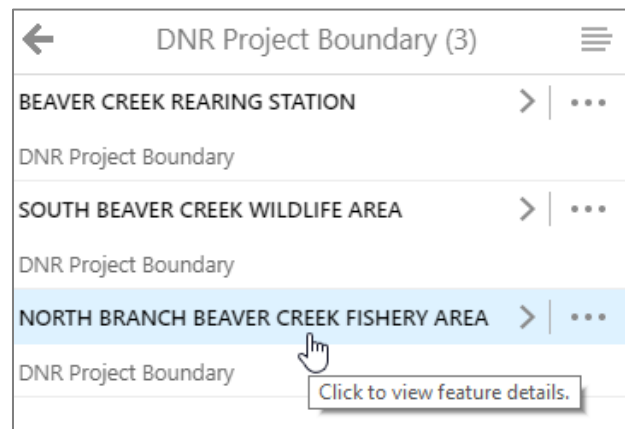


Matching records appear in the Search Results pane. In this example, a search for "Beaver Creek" returns two State Natural Areas, three DNR Project Boundaries, and eight features for DNR Managed Lands.



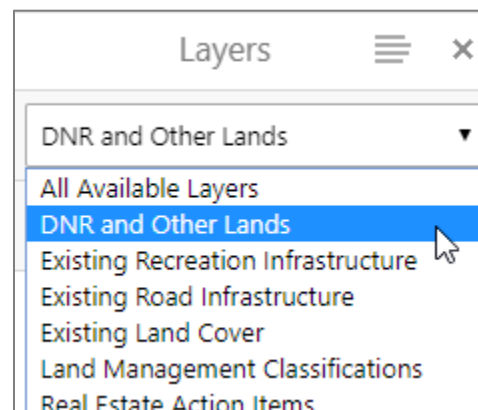
Click on the type of feature you want. In most cases, this will be DNR Project Boundary.

Finally, click the name of the property you want to view, and the map will automatically zoom to that property.

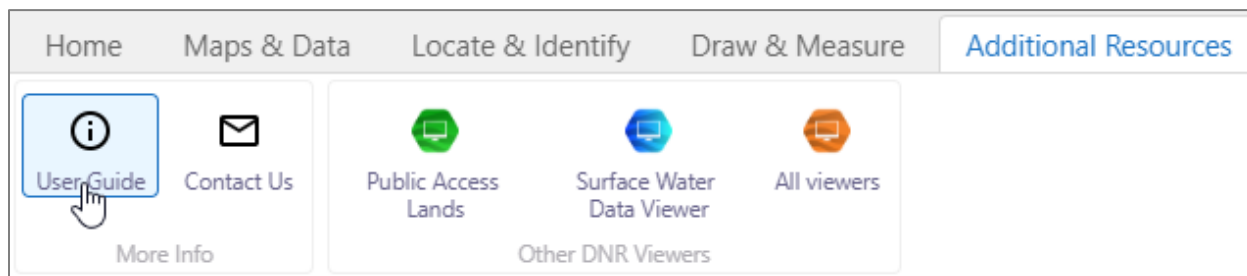


3. Choose a map theme

The default map theme is DNR and Other Lands. To view a different map theme, select it from the Layers drop down menu.



To learn more about additional capabilities of the Property Planning Viewer, click the User Guide button on the Additional Resources tab.



Real Estate Action Items are also located on the Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan website, under the maps tab.

LAND MANAGEMENT CLASSIFICATIONS

All department lands must be assigned a land management classification per NR 44. These classifications for a property or management area within a property are determined during the master planning process. Management areas and their classifications defined in this plan are mapped to project boundaries. This ensures parcels purchased within a project boundary after this plan's approval have management objectives assigned. Those properties purchased after this plan's approval and falling outside a land management area will be assigned a land management classification following the process described in NR 44. DNR properties within the Northwest Lowlands plan have assigned one of the following land management classifications:

Habitat Management Area (HMA) (NR 44.06(5)): The primary objective for HMAs is to provide integrated upland, wetland and/or aquatic habitat management that meets critical life-cycle needs for a variety of plant and animal species. Typically, the emphasis is to provide habitats needed to sustain productive game species populations. Areas that initially do not have desired habitat conditions but have a high potential to be restored may be included under this classification.

Native Community Management Area (NCMA) (NR 44.06(6)): NCMA's are managed to perpetuate pre-settlement plant and animal communities, whether upland, wetland, or aquatic, and protect the biological diversity of the native ecosystems. A native community is a distinct and reoccurring assemblage of indigenous flora and fauna associated with a particular set of physical characteristics. Areas that initially do not have the desired community conditions but have a reasonable potential to be restored may be included in this classification. All traditional recreational uses, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and nature enjoyment, are allowed on NCMA's unless an area needs to be closed to protect a rare species during breeding season or to protect a very fragile habitat.

Recreation Management Area (RMA) (NR 44.06(8)) with Type 3 and 4 Recreational Use Settings: Lands in this classification are managed to provide and maintain land and water areas, and facilities for outdoor public recreation and education.

Scenic Resources Management Area (SRMA) (NR 44.06(9)): Scenic resources management areas protect, maintain and enhance for long-term public enjoyment lands or waters having unique aesthetic qualities or outstanding scenic beauty and lands where managing for aesthetics is a primary concern due to significant or special public use of the area.

Special Management Area (SMA) (NR 44.06(7)): Lands in this classification are managed to provide and maintain areas or facilities for special uses not included under other land management classifications.

Northwest Lowlands properties all share the same land management classification based on their administrative designation. Land management classifications by administrative designation and associated acreages are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Summary of Land Management Classifications and Acres for Property Types in the Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan

Administrative Designation	Land Management Classification	Total Acres in Northwest Lowlands
State Habitat Areas	Habitat Management Area	206
State Public Access Sites	Recreation Management Area – Type 4	5
State-Owned Islands	Scenic Resource Management Areas	48

FOREST CERTIFICATION

The management classifications listed in Table 2.1 reflect that all DNR-managed lands, including state parks, fishery areas, wildlife areas and natural areas have been audited by an independent third party to the Forest Stewardship Council® and Sustainable Forestry Initiative® forest management standards (license codes FSC®C006979 and SFI®-00059) and are recognized as being well managed. These certifications emphasize the state’s commitment to responsible management and conservation of its forestlands that support economic activities, protect wildlife habitat, and provide recreational opportunities.

COMMON MANAGEMENT FOR ALL PROPERTIES

Common Elements Overview

DNR properties, while diverse in the resources they offer, are governed under the same state statutes, administrative codes and processes, and share many standard practices for habitat and property management. Given this, the department has developed a set of Common Elements, procedures commonly used by the department that apply broadly to many situations addressed in master plans. Common Elements apply to all properties, unless otherwise noted in the individual property’s management plan.

Common Elements for DNR Property Management

Common Elements are grouped into three categories:

Master Planning Process

The Master Planning Process Common Element provides an overview of how the department conducts planning, including phases in the process, variances and amendments, and public involvement.

Components of Master Plans

The Components of Master Plans Common Elements are divided into four major categories: general property management practices, real estate management practices, habitats and their management, and recreation facilities and their management. These describe most of the common DNR practices for managing department lands.

Background and Supporting Information

The Background and Supporting Information Common Elements contain references, definitions, and other supporting information used during the planning process.

All Common Elements are based on existing department codes, policies, handbooks, and common practices. General property management, recreation management, and real estate management practices are similar on all properties, no matter their resources. Habitat management on any given property varies widely given the variety of resource situations that might be present.

Table 2.2 shows the Habitat Management Common Elements applicable to a property when a habitat classification is present. It also shows Common Elements available for general habitat management categories, taxa-specific management, and management practices.

Table 2.2. Habitats and their Management Common Elements

Type	Common Element Documents Available	
Habitat Classifications and Associated Common Elements		
Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Farmland	
Forested Wetland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Black SpruceBottomland HardwoodsEphemeral PondForested Seep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Swamp HardwoodsTamarackWhite Cedar
Open Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Coldwater StreamsImpoundments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">LakesWarmwater Streams
Open Wetland-Marsh	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Emergent WetlandMuskeg Open Bog	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sedge Meadow
Shrub Wetland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wetland Shrub Alder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wetland Shrub Dogwood
Shrub Savanna	<ul style="list-style-type: none">BarrensOak Savanna	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Upland Shrub
Upland Broad-Leaved Deciduous Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">AspenCentral HardwoodsNorthern Hardwoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Oak and Oak Dominated Mixed ForestRed MapleWhite Birch
Upland Coniferous Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Balsam Fir White SpruceConifer PlantationJack Pine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Red PineWhite Pine
Upland Grass	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prairie	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Surrogate Grasslands
General Habitat Management		
General Habitat Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">General Fisheries ManagementGeneral Forest Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">General Wildlife Habitat Management
Taxa-Specific Habitat Management		
Taxa-Specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bat HibernaculaHerp HibernaculaMigratory Bird Stopover	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mussel HabitatTurtle Nesting Site
Practices		
Terrestrial Habitat Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ClearcutCoppiceDirect Seeding and PlantingFarming PracticesGrazingGroup SelectionIntermediate TreatmentMowing, Brushing & HayingOverstory Removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Passive ManagementPatch SelectionPesticide TreatmentsPrescribed FireSeed TreeShelterwoodSingle Tree SelectionSite Preparation
Aquatic Habitat Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fish PassageInstream PracticesLake Aeration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Streambank PracticesWater Level Manipulation

A sample step by step use for Table 2.2, is as follows:

1. Badger State Wildlife Area land cover table (Table 2.3) shows upland grass is present. Property management for the Badger State Wildlife Area in this plan states Common Elements for Habitats and their Management apply to the property. The property manager references Table 2.2.
2. Table 2.2 shows Prairie and Surrogate Grasslands Common Elements are available for the Upland Grass Habitat Classification. The property manager, using her knowledge of the property and DNR land cover databases, knows surrogate grasslands are present on the property.
3. The property manager then accesses the DNR Property Planning website and views the Surrogate Grassland Common Element. The Surrogate Grassland Common Element describes authorized management for surrogate grasslands.
4. Since the property plan stated Habitats and their Management Common Elements applied to the property, all management considerations and practices described in the Surrogate Grassland Common Element are authorized – unless noted otherwise in the property plan section.
5. The property manager may then implement the management for surrogate grasslands following the Surrogate Grassland Common Element and any applicable property-specific objectives and prescriptions.

The land cover table for any property or management area shows Habitat Classifications. On larger properties, the land cover table may also show representative WisFIRS (Wisconsin Field Inventory Reporting System) cover types (as Table 2.3 does). Either can be used for identifying the applicable Common Elements. State-owned Islands, State Public Access sites and other smaller DNR properties may not have land cover tables included in the property section of the plan. If a land cover table is not present in the property section, and the property management described includes Habitats and their Management Common Elements, the property manager should use WisFIRS to determine land cover and applicable Common Elements.

Table 2.2 shows all Common Elements applicable to each Habitat Classification. Only those Common Elements for Habitats and their Management associated with the habitat classifications present on a property are authorized. Returning to the Badger State Wildlife Area example, because the Upland Grass habitat classification is present, and Table 2.2 shows both Prairie and Surrogate Grassland Common Elements, both are authorized for use. As are any common elements shown in Table 2.2 as associated with Upland Broad-Leaved Deciduous Forest or Shrub Wetland. However, the Barrens, Oak Savanna and Upland Shrub Common Elements are not, because the Shrub Savanna habitat classification is not present on the property.

Table 2.3. Example Property Land Cover Table

Badger State Wildlife Area			
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover	Representative WisFIRS Cover Types
Upland Broad-Leaved Deciduous Forest	100	50	Aspen, Northern Hardwoods
Upland Grass	50	25	Surrogate Grassland
Shrub Wetland	50	25	Alder

ROAD MANAGEMENT AND VEHICLE ACCESS

Access to and within DNR properties is on a variety of roads including state and county highways, town roads and DNR managed roads. Roads managed by other governmental units, including townships, counties and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, are outside the scope of this regional master plan. The properties have a network of developed roads and parking lots or areas used for management purposes and public access.

These management and public access roads provide access for managing timber, improving fish and wildlife habitat, fighting fires, recreation among other important activities that take place on department lands. Management roads closed to public vehicles are gated or signed.

Department roads that are not open to public vehicles typically are maintained as primitive or lightly developed road standards and provide access for management vehicles and equipment as well as are foot-access-ways for hunters and hikers.

On primitive roads, which are often used only seasonally and are not regularly maintained, ruts and downed trees may be present. Maintenance is completed on primitive roads as needed. Public access roads managed by the department generally are constructed and maintained as either lightly developed or moderately developed roads. The property manager may determine which of these road standards to apply on a case by case basis.

The Existing Road Infrastructure theme within the DNR Property Planning Viewer shows the current DNR managed road network on each property. Properties that do not show roads have no DNR managed roads inventoried. Roads open to public vehicles and those closed are shown. No change in the open or closed status of the roads shown is proposed in this plan.

The following road management and objectives should be applied to properties in the Northwest Lowlands.

Road Management Objective

- Provide a network of roads and parking lots or areas within the properties that meet land management and recreational access objectives, while minimizing environmental impacts and management costs.

Classifications of DNR managed roads defined

The roads managed by the department fall into four different development level classifications. The classifications reflect a range of development and maintenance standards. Most roads are primitive, lightly or moderately developed.

The road classifications are defined by NR44.07(3) and are as follows:

Primitive road: A primitive road shall be a temporary road, a permanent seasonal road or a permanent all-season road which is primarily a single lane with a maximum sustained cleared width normally not exceeding 12 feet, it has no or little grading, with limited cut and fill, is surfaced with primitive or native materials and has a maximum speed design of 15 mph. Due to the variability of roadbed conditions at different times and places, some primitive roads might not be negotiable by ordinary highway vehicles.

Lightly developed road: A lightly developed road shall be a temporary road, a permanent seasonal road or a permanent all-season road which is primarily a single lane with a maximum sustained cleared width normally not exceeding 16 feet, is lightly to well-graded with minimal cut and fill, is surfaced with primitive, native or aggregate materials except in limited special use situations where asphalt may be used, and has a maximum speed design of 15 mph. Due to the variability of roadbed conditions at different times and places, some lightly developed roads might not be negotiable by ordinary highway vehicles.

Moderately developed road: A moderately developed road shall be a permanent seasonal road or a permanent all-season road which typically is 2-lane, but may be one-lane, have a maximum sustained cleared width normally not exceeding 45 feet for 2-lane and 30 feet for one-lane, a well-graded roadbed and may have moderate cuts and fills and shallow ditching, has a surface of aggregate, asphalt or native material, and a maximum design speed of 25 mph.

Fully developed road: A fully developed road shall be a permanent all-season road with a cleared width normally of 50 feet or more, a roadbed with cuts and fills as needed, an aggregate, asphalt or other paved surface and be designed for speeds exceeding 25 mph.

Management Prescriptions

- Maintain the network of roads shown in the Existing Road Infrastructure theme within the DNR Property Planning Viewer for properties within the Northwest Lowlands at their designated development level.
- Maintain designated public access roads and parking lots or areas as open for public use as shown in the Existing Road Infrastructure theme of the DNR Property Planning Viewer. Roads shown as open seasonally may be closed based on season (i.e. not maintained in winter) or be open for specific time periods, such as fall hunting seasons. Time periods during which seasonal roads are open or closed are determined by the property manager.
- Maintain permanent roads in a sustainable condition following the standard road management protocols in the Property Access Common Element.
- As public access and department management needs demand, change road development levels and public use status through the master plan variance process set in NR 44.04(4) Wis. Adm. Code.

GENERAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AND USES

All department-owned lands within the Northwest Lowlands are open to traditional outdoor recreational uses including hunting, fishing, and trapping, except in refuges as posted. Other activities allowed on these lands include wildlife viewing, photography, hiking, paddling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, collection of wild edibles, and nature study. Edible fruits and nuts, wild mushrooms, wild asparagus, and watercress may be removed by hand without a permit for personal consumption by the collector. However, collection of seeds, roots, or other plant parts is prohibited. Individual properties may offer additional recreational opportunities such as motorized or nonmotorized trail activities or camping. Details on additional recreational offerings can be found within individual property sections of this plan.

Foot travel (including skiing and snowshoeing) is allowed on all department lands, service roads, dikes, berms, and firebreaks unless otherwise noted. Areas closed to foot travel may include wildlife refuges, closed easements, or areas temporarily restricted during habitat management activities, such as timber cutting or prescribed burns, due to safety concerns.

Motorized vehicle access is available on designated public access roads and parking areas. Snowmobiles and ATVs/UTVs (All-Terrain Vehicles/Utility-Terrain Vehicles) are allowed only on trails and routes designated for their use. Allowances exist for motorized use by individuals with mobility impairments under the power-driven mobility device regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information on these allowances, please refer to the 'Disabled Accessibility' paragraphs in the Property Access Common Element. Information on rules governing public use of department-owned lands is found in Chapter NR 45, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

The following management priorities and protocols apply to all properties in this regional master plan. If property-specific management objectives and prescriptions described in this document conflicts with these management priorities and protocols, the property-specific management take precedence.

GENERAL RECREATION AND PUBLIC USE PRIORITIES

- Provide opportunities for high-quality nature-based recreational activities as appropriate to and compatible with property designations and capabilities.

- Provide accessibility for mobility-impaired individuals where feasible and seek to identify opportunities to improve accessibility at existing facilities.

GENERAL RECREATION AND PUBLIC USE PROTOCOLS

- Install, maintain, and monitor parking areas, access roads, boat access sites, and signage consistent with department rules and policies, and as appropriate to the property designation.
- Look for opportunities to enhance accessibility of current facilities and provide new accessible facilities as feasible and appropriate to the property designation.

Additional property-specific public use management prescriptions are included in the individual property sections of this chapter.

STATE PUBLIC ACCESS SITES

State public access sites within the Northwest Lowlands provide access to various waterbodies and may contain back-in or carry-in boat access, or they may be undeveloped. As required by NR 1.90, Wis. Adm. Code, it is the goal of the State of Wisconsin to provide, maintain and improve access to Wisconsin's navigable lakes, rivers, and streams for the public. All properties designated as state public access sites in the Northwest Lowlands will follow the management described in this section, unless otherwise specified. The public access sites in Table 2.4 are covered under this section. Any property designated as a state public access site during the period this plan is in effect will also follow the management described in this section.

Maps of these properties can be accessed by clicking the property name in Table 2.4 or by clicking any of the map links in Table A.1.

Table 2.4. Northwest Lowlands State Public Access Sites

Proposed or Existing Name	County	Facilities Present
Nimon Lake State Public Access	Polk	Carry-in boat launch
Twin Lake Public Access Laketown	Polk	Back-in boat launch, parking area
Trade Lake Public Access	Burnett	Back-in boat launch

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

All state public access sites in the region are classified as Recreation Management Areas: Type 4. All management objectives and prescriptions are applicable both short and long-term.

Objectives

- Provide access for the public to the region's waterways commensurate with the individual water's ability to support such access.
- Alone or in cooperation with local government, exercise DNR management and regulatory responsibilities to assure that levels and types of use of navigable waters are consistent with protection of public health, safety and welfare, including protection on natural resources.

Prescriptions

- Follow General Property Management and Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements. Determine land cover and follow appropriate common elements in the Habitats and their Management category. Reference Table 2.2 for available habitat common element documents. Where common element considerations conflict with management prescribed in this plan, this plan should be followed.
- Maintain current facilities as shown in Table 2.4. One parking area may be developed per property.

STATE HABITAT AREAS

State habitat areas are properties designated with the purpose of enhancing wildlife-based recreation, including hunting, fishing, nature appreciation and the viewing of game and nongame species. The Northwest Lowlands contains three state habitat areas.

Maps of these properties can be accessed by clicking the property name in Table 2.5 or by clicking any of the map links in Table A.1.

Table 2.5. Northwest Lowlands State Habitat Areas

Name	Acres	County	Description
Alabama Lake State Habitat Area	140	Polk	Alabama Lake State Habitat Area consists of 11.5 acres of land open to public access on the shore of Alabama Lake and 128.1 acres of easement closed to the public. The open portion is primarily upland deciduous forest, with some small pockets of open wetland and upland grass. The property is accessed via 230 th St.
Lake Nebagamon State Habitat Area	40	Douglas	Lake Nebagamon State Habitat Area is located on Minnesuing Creek just south of Lake Nebagamon. The property is primarily forested and shrub wetland. Small areas of upland are grass, upland conifer, or upland deciduous cover types. Access to the property is via East Jim Johnson Road or West Lake Road.
Round Lake State Habitat Area	24	Burnett	Round Lake State Habitat Area consists entirely of forested, shrub and open wetlands on the southwest shore of Round Lake. The property is accessed only via Round Lake. A developed boat launch on Stillson Road is 0.05 miles from the property and facilitates this access.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The three State Habitat Areas in the Northwest Lowlands region will follow the management objectives and prescriptions given in this section. All management objectives and prescriptions are applicable both short and long-term.

Objectives

- Provide opportunities for fishing, hunting, hiking and other public access recreational activities.
- Maintain and enhance habitat to sustain game and other fish and wildlife populations.

Prescriptions

- Follow General Property Management and Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements. Determine land cover and follow appropriate Common Elements in the Habitats and their Management

category. Reference Table 2.2 for available habitat Common Element documents. Where Common Element considerations conflict with management prescribed in this plan, this plan should be followed.

- One parking area and, where appropriate, carry-in water access point may be developed on each State Habitat Area in Table 2.5.

STATE-OWNED ISLANDS

The Northwest Lowlands, a region rich in rivers, lakes and flowages, also contains many islands owned by the State of Wisconsin. This section outlines management for those islands under the designation of state-owned island. State-owned islands are unsurveyed and unattached islands in inland lakes north of townships 33 and 34, granted to the State of Wisconsin from the federal government through House Bill No. 13417, introduced in 1911 and passed in 1912. The number of state-owned islands changes as surveying methods improve, property disputes are resolved, and water levels vary. Islands not recognized when the initial grant from the federal government occurred in 1911 are still granted to the State of Wisconsin as they are recognized as meeting the criteria of the initial act.

The Northwest Lowlands region contains 46 state-owned islands. The federal government granted these islands to Wisconsin to be added to the state's forest reserves. As such, all state-owned islands are under the administrative control of the Division of Forestry. State-owned islands are managed according to department Handbook 2861 – State Owned Island Handbook and the following state statutes and administrative codes:

- Section 28.02(1), Wis. Stats. defines state-owned islands as state forest lands.
- Section 28.02(4), Wis. Stats. establishes that sale of state-owned islands is subject to the same restrictions as the sale of state forest lands.
- Section 28.02(6), Wis. Stats. prohibits leases on state-owned islands after June 25, 1925, except existing leases to charitable and nonprofit organizations and where improvements had been made.
- Section 29.27(3), Wis. Stats. governs the construction, identification and removal of waterfowl blinds on state lands.
- Chapter NR 45, Wis. Adm. Code pertains to the conduct of visitors to state parks, state forests, and all state-owned islands.
- Section NR 1.31, Wis. Adm. Code establishes that the department maintains state-owned islands in as natural and undisturbed condition as possible while permitting limited public use on islands suited for water route camping or day use.
- Section NR 1.48, Wis. Adm. Code further provides that no leases for private use shall be executed, extended, or renewed, except if the Secretary determines that the lease will serve a public benefit or provide for public use.

State-owned islands are named according to the county in which they are found. Maps for the state-owned islands in this section can be accessed by clicking the map links in Table A.1. Those state-owned islands for which this plan establishes management are:

State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Little McGraw Lake - Island No. 1

State Owned Islands - Burnett County – Big Trade Lake - Island No. 1

State Owned Islands - Burnett County – Big Trade Lake - Island No. 2

State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Dollar Island

State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Little Island

State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Tomahawk Island

State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Steele Lake - Island No. 1

State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Steele Lake - Island No. 2

State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 1

State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 2

State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 3

State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 4

State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Steele Lake - Island No. 2

Other state-owned islands not currently recognized as such, but falling within the Northwest Lowlands region, will be covered under this plan at the time of designation as a state-owned island.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The primary purpose of state-owned islands is to enhance the aesthetics of the natural environment. All state-owned islands covered under this plan are classified as Scenic Resource Management Areas with Type 3 Recreational Use Setting subclassifications. The following management objectives and prescriptions apply.

Objectives

- Manage islands primarily for aesthetics, fish and wildlife habitat, and related recreational uses. Species and natural community management should be consistent with the surrounding landscape. Follow the common elements listed on the property planning webpage for management practices associated with the targeted species or natural community.
- In addition to managing for aesthetics, follow the DNR State-Owned Islands Handbook guidelines for island classification and management. Island classification determination should be at the discretion of the property management team.

Prescriptions

- Use primarily passive management to preserve aesthetic value and wildlife habitat. To the degree feasible and practicable, design and conduct vegetation and other land management activities, including practices listed in Habitats and their Management Common Elements, to maintain and enhance an attractive, natural appearing landscape when passive management is ineffective.
- Following a catastrophic event (e.g. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pests), salvage may be completed after consultation and direction by a team consisting of representatives from wildlife, fisheries, Natural Heritage Conservation and forestry programs along with the property manager. Salvage operations should focus on safety and meeting overall vegetation management goals.

REAL ESTATE SECTION

OVERVIEW

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (department) purchases land to manage and protect natural resources and to provide recreational opportunities to all residents and visitors to the State of Wisconsin. Through the land acquisition program, wetlands, forests, scenic areas, prairies, savannas, wildlife and fish habitat, rare species habitat, glacial features and other resources are being protected and managed.

The Real Estate Section within the department's Bureau of Facilities and Lands acquires land through fee title, easements, donations and leases. The section also conveys leases, easements, agreements and permits associated with land ownership. The section also manages the selling of land no longer necessary for the state's use for conservation purposes. It implements the payment in lieu of tax system (PILT), resolves trespass settlements and engages in other activities aimed at preparing the land for long-term public use and benefit.

REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT AND MASTER PLANNING

Through master planning, the department's entire real estate portfolio is reviewed and analyzed. The topics listed below are all considered and reviewed during a planning process. This analysis allows the department to identify future real estate management goals, which are then included as a part of the master plan.

Land Acquisition

The department acquires lands under the authority of sec. 23.09(2)(d), Wis. Stats., from willing sellers. At times, it is in the best interest of the department and landowner for the department to acquire partial rights to a property (easement or lease). Acquisition priorities are identified in the master plan and are, in most cases, visually represented through the department's project boundaries.

Acquisitions for department properties vary from year to year and are based on several factors, such as resource management or recreation needs and the availability of funding (which may be from a variety of sources).

Land Sales

The department's Natural Resources Board (NRB), at times, may sell lands and structures under its jurisdiction, except central or district office facilities, when the NRB determines that those lands are no longer necessary for the state's use for conservation purposes (sec. 23.15 (1), Wis. Stats.). Upon receiving payment, the department deposits the funds into the conservation fund to be used exclusively for the purpose of purchasing other land for the creating and establishing of public hunting and fishing grounds, wildlife and fish refuges, state parks, and/or land in the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (sec. 23.15 (4), Wis. Stats.).

Conveyed Easements, Access Permits, and Land Use Agreements

Conveyed Easements provide access across state property for utilities, town roads, county highways and, in some cases, individuals. Easements are permanent and cannot be changed by a master plan. Access Permits provide access across state property to private land owners adjacent to department lands. Land use agreements provide for a variety of uses on a department property that are consistent with the property's master plan, such as bike trails.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes

The department makes an annual payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) under ss. 70.113 and 70.114, Wis. Stats., to the appropriate municipality for all property it owns in fee title. More detailed information on how the department pays PILT may be at dnr.wi.gov by searching for the keyword “PILT”.

Project Boundaries and Stream Bank Easement (SBE) Eligible Streams

Project boundaries and stream bank easement eligible streams are established areas on the landscape, created by a Natural Resources Board (NRB) action, as a preferred area where the department may acquire land. Through the planning process, changes on the landscape and changing recreation and resource needs are identified. These factors may lead to proposed changes to the boundary or SBEs in a master plan, under the authority in Manual Code (MC) 2212, MC 2105.2, MC 2210.03, sec. 23.094, Wis. Stats and s. NR 51.60 Admin. Code.

Acquisition Authority

An acquisition authority is created by the NRB, which allows the department to acquire land for a specific purpose/land use. An example of this is the authority to purchase land for Devil’s Lake State Park. This authority identifies a targeted area on the landscape within a project boundary to be used for state park purposes. Another example is the Statewide Public Access authority, which allows the department to acquire lands adjacent to rivers and lakes to provide public access to waterways. This authority does not have specific project boundaries; it is statewide in nature. As such, it allows lands to be acquired along these water features anywhere in the state. New, or changes to, existing acquisition authorities are sometimes proposed as a part of the master plan.

Acquisition Goal

When an acquisition authority is created by the NRB, an acquisition acreage goal for that authority is also established. This is the total acreage that can be acquired by the department under that specific acquisition authority. Acquisition goal changes are sometimes proposed as a part of the master plan.

Property Naming

Under the authority of MC 2281.1, the NRB has the authority to name a property that has not been expressly named by the Legislature. Property name changes are sometimes proposed during a master plan.

Property Redesignation

Under the authority of s. NR 1.415, Wis. Admin. Code, the NRB has the authority to periodically review land use designations (acquisition authorities) to determine whether a redesignation will secure better management. Property re-designations are sometimes proposed during a master plan.

REAL ESTATE ACTIONS

Clean up of Project Boundaries

Project boundaries in the past may have been developed using parcel maps or aerial photographs rather than the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools that exist today. This GIS technology has improved in accuracy over time. In some cases, it is clear the original intent of the project was to follow the nearest river, road or existing department ownership, but because of changing technology, a boundary line may be slightly “off” from these features. With NRB approval of this plan, where applicable, some project boundaries included in this master plan will be snapped to or aligned to better define these boundaries. These snapped areas are very small in size, usually less than 0.1 acres, or are snapped a few feet to the nearest feature.

Statewide Scattered Acquisition Property Naming

The Northwest Lowlands Master Plan includes unnamed properties purchased under a variety of statewide scattered acquisition authorities (Extensive Wildlife, Scattered Wildlife, etc.). These parcels do not currently have a NRB approved (official) local name identifying them. The master plan team used MC 2281.1 as well as internal draft naming guidance to propose names for these properties. Those naming and property grouping recommendations are included as a part of this plan and are described, as applicable, below, as well as in Appendix B and map series AA-AI.

PROPERTY SPECIFIC REAL ESTATE ACTIONSSt. Croix River Public Access (Map B)

- St. Croix River Public Access parcels will be re-designated to Governor Knowles State Forest.
- Transfer 15.57 acres of acquisition goal from St. Croix River Public Access to Governor Knowles State Forest.
- After this transfer the St. Croix River Public Access project will be decommissioned.

This project falls within the Governor Knowles State Forest project boundary and does not currently have a boat launch at the site. It is surrounded by National Park Service Lands, which offer boat access sites for the St. Croix River. This parcel is currently not being used as a public access site and is primarily used for forestry. The Fish and Forestry programs agree it will secure better management if the parcel is re-designated to officially become part of Governor Knowles State Forest.

Governor Knowles State Forest (Map B)

- Expand the Governor Knowles State Forest project boundary by 0.02 acres to incorporate a department held easement.

This expansion is around parcels being re-designated from St. Croix River Public Access to Governor Knowles State Forest.

REM-Lake Nebagamom – Proposed Name Lake Nebagamom State Habitat Area (Map AA)

- Establish 40 acres of acquisition goal for REM-Lake Nebagamom to account for what is currently owned.
- Redesignate these parcels from REM-Lake Nebagamom to Habitat Area.
- Transfer the newly established 40 acres of acquisition goal from REM-Lake Nebagamom to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Lake Nebagamom State Habitat Area for these parcels.

The REM-Lake Nebagamom acquisition authority does not have any acquisition goal established. For cleanup and accounting purposes, the plan recommends establishing a goal of 40 acres to account for the total acres owned for REM-Lake Nebagamom. Then to transfer that goal amount to Habitat Area, since the parcel will be re-designated as Habitat Area. The name of Nebagamom Lake is a locally recognized name for these parcels.

REM-Nimon Lake – Proposed Name Nimon Lake State Public Access (Map AB)

- Establish five acres of acquisition goal for REM-Nimon Lake to account for what is currently owned.
- Re-designate these parcels from REM-Nimon Lake to Statewide Public Access.
- Transfer the newly established 5 acres of acquisition goal from REM-Nimon Lake to Statewide Public Access.
- Establish an official local name of Nimon Lake State Public Access for these parcels.

The REM-Nimon Lake acquisition authority does not have any acquisition goal established. For cleanup and accounting purposes, the plan recommends establishing a goal of five acres to account for total acres owned for REM-Nimon Lake. Then to transfer that goal amount to Statewide Public Access, since the parcel will be re-designated as Statewide Public Access. The name of Nimon Lake is a locally recognized name for these parcels.

REM-Round Lake – Proposed Name Round Lake State Habitat Area (Map AC)

- Establish 23.7 acres of acquisition goal for REM-Round Lake to account for what is currently owned.
- Re-designate these parcels from REM-Round Lake to Habitat Area.
- Transfer the newly established 23.7 acres of acquisition goal from REM-Round Lake to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Round Lake State Habitat Area for these parcels.

The REM-Round Lake acquisition authority does not have any acquisition goal established. For cleanup and accounting purposes, the plan recommends establishing a goal of 23.7 acres to account for total acres owned for REM-Round Lake. Then to transfer that goal amount to Habitat Area, since the parcel will be re-designated as Habitat Area. The name of Round Lake is a locally recognized name for these parcels.

Statewide Wildlife Habitat – Proposed Name Alabama Lake State Habitat Area (Map AD)

- Re-designate these parcels from Statewide Wildlife Habitat to Habitat Area.
- Transfer 11.5 acres of acquisition goal from Statewide Wildlife Habitat to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Alabama Lake State Habitat Area for these parcels.

The re-designation and acreage goal transfer are clean-up actions related to the naming of this property. The name of Alabama Lake is a locally recognized name for these parcels.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Burnett County – Little McGraw Lake – Island No. 1 (Map AE)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Burnett County – Little McGraw Lake – Island No. 1 for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Burnett County – Little McGraw Lake – Island No. 1 is the naming structure utilized within Forestry's State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Burnett County – Big Trade Lake – Island No. 1 (Map AF)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Burnett County – Big Trade Lake – Island No. 1 for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Burnett County – Big Trade Lake – Island No. 1 is the naming structure utilized within Forestry's State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Burnett County – Big Trade Lake – Island No. 2 (Map AF)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Burnett County – Big Trade Lake – Island No. 2 for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Burnett County – Big Trade Lake – Island No. 2 is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Amnicon Lake – Dollar Island (Map AG)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Amnicon Lake – Dollar Island for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Amnicon Lake – Dollar Island is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Amnicon Lake – Little Island (Map AG)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Amnicon Lake – Little Island for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Amnicon Lake – Little Island is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Amnicon Lake – Tomahawk Island (Map AG)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Amnicon Lake – Tomahawk Island for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Amnicon Lake – Tomahawk Island is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Steele Lake – Island No. 1 (Map AH)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Steele Lake – Island No. 1 for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Steele Lake – Island No. 1 is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Steele Lake – Island No. 2 (Map AH)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Steele Lake – Island No. 2 for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Douglas County – Steele Lake – Island No. 2 is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 1 (Map AI)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 1 for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 1 is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 2 (Map AI)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 2 for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 2 is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 3 (Map AI)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 3 for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 3 is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 4 (Map AI)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 4 for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Polk County – Alabama Lake – Island No. 4 is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State-Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

Hoover Lake State Natural Area

This project currently has no department ownership (acquisition) within it.

- Decommission the project by removing the project boundary.

The Hoover Lake SNA project was approved in April 2007 under the Statewide Natural Areas Project authority. It has a project boundary of 100 acres which incorporates a cluster of three small lakes identified as Wild Lakes, including Hoover Lake, classified as a rare meromictic lake. Meromixis refers to the permanent thermal and chemical stratification of a lake’s water resulting from an extremely small surface area coupled with great depth. To date, no lands have been acquired within the project boundary. Upon recent further analysis of the lake data, it was determined that Hoover Lake does not possess meromictic qualities and therefore does not merit special protective status as a State Natural Area. It is recommended that the Hoover Lake project be dropped from further consideration for acquisition as an SNA.

Chapter 3 : Regional and Property Analysis

The Regional Analysis component of this plan describes the ecological, cultural, economic, and recreational context of the Northwest Lowlands region and the considerations for planning that arise from that context. Regional context characterizes property resources within the ecological landscape and highlights their degree of significance both regionally and locally. This analysis identifies significant ecological and recreational needs of the region, and potential social demands or constraints affecting these properties.

The regional analysis is a useful tool for evaluating the significance of each property in meeting the region's needs. The region for this plan is based on the Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape. The analysis describes the existing natural resources, recreational, and socio-economic context of the Northwest Lowlands.

ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPES OF WISCONSIN

The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin (WDNR, 2015a) is a reference document which delineates the 16 Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin. Ecological landscapes are areas with similar ecology and management potential. Each landscape chapter within the book contains descriptions of ecological resources and socioeconomic condition descriptions of Wisconsin's role in sustaining these resources within regional and global perspectives and management opportunities best suited to the region. This analysis draws from Chapter 16 of The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin, which describes the Northwest Lowlands. Descriptions of natural resources, socio-economic characteristics and recreational resources for this region are provided in detail in Chapter 16 of The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin.

NORTHWEST LOWLANDS

The Northwest Lowlands is 675 square miles encompassing portions of Douglas, Burnett, and Polk counties characterized by cold winters and a short growing season of 122 days. The climate is favorable for forests and less so for agriculture. Limited bedrock outcroppings are present, except for the Douglas Fault, which forms the northern boundary of the Northwest Lowlands and has significant cliffs, rock-walled gorges, bedrock glades, and waterfalls associated with it. Other major landforms in the region include ground and end moraines with drumlins in the southwest.

The region is a major drainage divide, containing the headwaters of numerous streams flowing to the St. Croix River in the south and Lake Superior in the north. In the north, many of the streams run near parallel northeast-southwest courses, following bedrock ridges created by harder strata of lava alternating with weaker sedimentary rock. These ridges were tilted upward due to rifting and continental collision and influence the surface topography of the region. Loams are the dominant soil of the region, with a large amount of peat deposits also present in the poorly drained lowland areas (WDNR, 2015a).

ECOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

ECOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Among Wisconsin's ecological landscapes, the Northwest Lowlands is one of the few regions with large areas of remote terrain. The northern portion of the Northwest Lowlands features extensive forests and undisturbed wetlands that are largely unbroken by developments. Few major roads exist. The abundant wetlands in the region likely contributed to the relative lack of fire as a historical disturbance -- in stark contrast to the neighboring Northwest Sands landscape. Aspen and young northern hardwoods cover almost two-thirds of the landscape. A high prevalence of wet soils, organic soils, and lowland conifer forest, make windfalls a common occurrence in the region.

548 miles of perennial streams flow through the Northwest Lowlands. Overall, the surface water quality of the Northwest Lowlands is very good, with many outstanding and exceptional resource waters present (WDNR, 2016). The St. Croix River, classified as an outstanding resource water in many stretches throughout this landscape, is an excellent aquatic resource. The river's waters and associated forested corridor supports numerous rare aquatic and terrestrial species. Unbroken natural landscape and stream corridors (e.g., the Spruce and Tamarack rivers) and the watersheds of streams that flow into the St. Croix River maintain high-quality aquatic habitats and aesthetic values of the ecosystem.

Approximately 70% of the Northwest Lowlands is forested, with Aspen-Birch as the predominant forested cover type at 43%. The proportion of conifers has declined overtime. This is especially true for eastern white and red pines. Large acid peatland complexes remain mostly intact. Several of the largest, and most undisturbed peatlands have been protected.

The major ecological characteristics of the Northwest Lowlands each have natural communities associated with them, as shown in the table below. The natural communities of the Northwest Lowlands are described in greater detail in Chapter 16 of *The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin*.

Table 3.1. Ecological features and their associated natural communities, aquatic features, and selected habitats

Ecological Feature	Associated Natural Communities, Aquatic Features, and Selected Habitats
Extensive contiguous forests	Boreal Forest Northern Dry Forest Northern Dry-Mesic Forest Northern Hardwood Swamp Northern Mesic Forest Northern Wet-Mesic Forest Northern White-cedar Swamp Northern Wet Forest Black Spruce Swamp Tamarack Swamp Ephemeral Pond
Large intact peatland complexes	Black Spruce Swamp Tamarack (Poor) Swamp Northern Wet-mesic Forest Northern Hardwood Swamp Northern White-cedar Swamp Alder Thicket Shrub-carr

Ecological Feature	Associated Natural Communities, Aquatic Features, and Selected Habitats
	Northern Sedge Meadow Poor Fen Open Bog Emergent Marsh
Upper St. Croix River corridor	Northern Dry Forest Northern Dry-mesic Forest Northern Mesic Forest Northern Hardwood Swamp Northern White-cedar Swamp Black Spruce Swamp Tamarack (Poor) Swamp Forested Seep Alder Thicket Shrub-carr Northern Sedge Meadow Ephemeral Pond Coolwater Stream Warmwater River Warmwater Stream Springs and Spring Runs
Stream headwaters	Coldwater Stream Coolwater Stream
Remote Undeveloped Waters	Northern Mesic Forest Black Spruce Swamp Tamarack (Poor) Swamp Northern Hardwood Swamp Northern White-cedar Swamp Alder Thicket Northern Sedge Meadow Open Bog Poor Fen Muskeg
Miscellaneous natural features	Ephemeral Pond Bedrock Glade Dry Cliff Moist Cliff

This table mirrors Table 17.3 of the Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin (WDNR, 2015a). It has been reformatted to fit this document. An “ecological feature” is a natural community or group of natural communities, or other significant habitats that occur in close proximity. They may be affected by similar natural disturbances or interdependent in some other way. Ecological features were defined as management opportunities because individual natural communities often occur as part of a continuum (e.g., prairie to savanna to woodland, or marsh to meadow to shrub swamp to wet forest) or characteristically occur within a group of interacting community types (e.g., lakes within a forested matrix) that for some purposes can more effectively be planned and managed together rather than as separate entities. This does not imply that management actions for the individual communities or habitats are the same.

ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

An ecological management opportunity refers to a chance to sustain or restore the environment in or to an ecologically beneficial state. In the Northwest Lowlands, the most significant opportunities for management are (WDNR, 2015a):

- Maintenance of the extensive, unbroken forests of the region. Current and future management needs include maintaining sufficient areas of both very young and older forests and restoring diminished cover types in configurations that complement rather than conflict with one another.
- Some of Wisconsin's largest, least disturbed acid peatland complexes occur here. These support a broad spectrum of bog, fen, and conifer swamp habitat specialist species.
- The upper St. Croix River corridor connects several ecological landscapes. The corridor contains natural communities and habitats that do not occur elsewhere in the Northwest Lowlands and supports an exceptionally diverse array of resident and migratory aquatic and terrestrial species.
- Headwaters of streams begin here and flow north to Lake Superior and south to the St. Croix River system.

Other significant ecological management opportunities found in the Northwest Lowlands include remnant stands of old-growth forest; stands of upland forest with a high proportion of conifers, dispersal, feeding, and resting areas for some large mammals and many migratory birds; and bedrock exposures, ephemeral ponds, seepage areas, and scattered rare species habitats. In general, there are key opportunities to provide and maintain corridors for species moving within the landscape, as well as to and from other landscapes. Some of the forests have a significant component of fir and spruce, with the potential to manage as a boreal-transition forest. Maintaining the large, contiguous area of undeveloped forest previously mentioned is a major opportunity. There are opportunities to restore and maintain older forest, increase structural attributes associated with older forests and identify high conservation value forests on public lands.

The large, intact peatlands here are outstanding natural features and contain some of Wisconsin's best examples of peatland communities. Many sensitive species are dependent on these wetlands to provide suitable breeding and foraging habitat. Several of the large wetlands have been identified as high conservation priorities and merit the strongest protection possible. In addition, these wetlands are the headwaters areas of some of the Northwest Lowlands most important streams.

Given the limited amount of DNR managed land within the Northwest Lowlands, the department has limited opportunity to manage for these significant ecological features. However, several opportunities to work with partners exist across administrative (federal, state, county, private) boundaries. For example, the Northwest Lowlands is a small part of an ecoregion that extends well into Minnesota. Black Lake Bog, a noteworthy two-state designated Natural Area on the MN-WI state line, provides opportunities to cooperate and coordinate management with Minnesota DNR for wide-ranging fauna such as gray wolf, moose, some birds and the habitat these species require. The National Park Service (NPS) has primary stewardship responsibilities for resources in and immediately adjacent to the St. Croix River. State, county and private entities have opportunities to continue to work with NPS on basic inventory, monitoring and management projects pertinent to this area.

OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE NORTHWEST LOWLANDS

Owing to the relatively small size and number of DNR properties in the Northwest Lowlands, recreation on department properties is limited. The properties of the Northwest Lowlands are open for public access and nature-based recreation activities including: hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, gathering wild edibles, fishing, hunting, trapping, and nature observation. The recent Recreation Opportunity Analysis for the Great Northwest Region (WDNR, 2018) did not address the few properties in the Northwest Lowlands.

SOCIOECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE NORTHWEST LOWLANDS

While this plan focuses on the resource and recreation management of the properties, underlying socioeconomic status and cultural contexts are important in understanding the needs of the public when planning for properties in the Northwest Lowlands. Due to the method by which economic and cultural data is collected and made available, the context given here is for Douglas county in which most of the Northwest Lowlands falls.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONTEXT

Population, Income, and Housing

As of the 2010 U.S. Census, the population of Douglas County was 43,721 at a density of 32 people per square mile. This makes up 0.8% of the state's population and is lower than the average population density statewide -- which is 105 persons per square mile. This includes the City of Superior, which is not in the Northwest Lowlands. Per capita income is \$26,396 (United States Census Bureau, 2018).

Economic Sectors

Government, tourism, health care, social services and retail are the largest sectors of employment within the counties of the Northwest Lowlands (WDNR, 2015a).

Land Use and Ownership

The federally-owned St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is part of the Northwest Lowlands. Several large DNR properties including Governor Knowles State Forest and Pattison State Park fall partially within the Northwest Lowlands. Neither is part of this planning process. Douglas County forest makes up a large part of this ecological landscape.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

The department's properties in the Northwest Lowlands are within the ceded territory of the Ojibwe Tribes. Native American tribes are independent, sovereign nations, as they were prior to the arrival of Europeans in North America. The Ojibwe Tribes ceded some lands in the northern one-third of Wisconsin to the United States Government in the Treaties of 1837 and 1842. In those treaties, they reserved their rights to hunt, trap, fish and gather within various publicly-owned lands. Treaty rights are currently being exercised and implemented.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The following information summarizes ecological and recreation considerations for planning and management in the Northwest Lowlands. This section is meant to be a summary of the type of information the department uses when making master planning decisions. Information is sourced from numerous documents, including:

- The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin: an assessment of ecological resources and a guide to planning sustainable management (WDNR, 2015a)
- Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015b)
- Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) (WDNR, 2012)
- Recreation Opportunity Analysis (ROA) for the Great Northwest Recreational Region (WDNR, 2018)

The master planning process accounts for both ecological and recreation considerations. Though the two may seem distinct, they are intertwined: outdoor recreation opportunities are shaped by the ecological characteristics of a property. Thus, the ecological information presented here also influences recreation planning on DNR properties.

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The department has undertaken extensive efforts to define ecological features of the state that should be targeted for management. Those priorities are reflected in the management planning of DNR properties. This section reflects ecological considerations that were taken into account during the regional property planning process.

Priority Habitats

Natural communities and priority habitats are foundational ecological considerations for master planning. These define the other ecological resources that may be present on a property. In seeking to maximize habitat and wildlife benefits with the fiscal resources available, DNR created a list of priority habitats. The top-rated priority habitats for northern Wisconsin are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. DNR Habitat Priorities for Northern Wisconsin

Terrestrial/Wetland	Aquatic
Deep marsh/shallow lakes (only those with wild rice opportunity)	Coldwater Streams
Great lakes dunes, wetlands, and shores	Large Lake – deep, soft, and very soft, seepage
Oak/pine barrens	Large Lake – deep, soft, drainage
Old Forests (natural origin pine, hemlock, cedar, northern hardwoods)	Large Lake – shallow, soft, drainage
Young forests	Lake Superior
	Spring Pond, lake – spring
	Springs and Spring Runs (hard)
	Springs and Spring Runs (soft)

Species of Greatest Conservation Need

The Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan identifies ecological priorities within each Ecological Landscape. Priorities represent the natural communities in each Ecological Landscape that are most important to Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). This concept is represented by the highlighted “priorities” section shown in the center of Figure 3.1. SGCN are native wildlife species with low or declining populations that are most at risk of no longer being a viable part of Wisconsin’s fauna. The center “priorities” can also be used to determine which natural communities provide the most habitat for SGCN and rare plants. For detailed information specific to the Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape, please see the Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015b).

Rare Animals

Wisconsin’s Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) Working List includes those species that are listed either at the Federal or State level. As of November 2009, NHI documented 89 rare animal species within the Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape including two mammals, 15 birds, four herptiles, six fishes, and 37 invertebrates. These include two U.S. Endangered species, five Wisconsin Endangered species, 12 Wisconsin Threatened species, and 47 Wisconsin Special Concern species (WDNR, 2017).

Rare Plants

Rare plant species occur in the large intact peatlands in the northern part of this landscape. The St. Croix River corridor harbors populations of rare plants that occur in habitats such as spring runs, seepages, and forested seeps. Dry open bluffs above the St. Croix River support rare prairie and barrens plants limited to rare habitats. Bedrock exposures such as cliffs and gorges provide critical habitat for specialized plants. Gorges in the north merit additional survey work. Lakes and streams in the remote, northern part of the ecological landscape are difficult to access and have not been well surveyed. These aquatic habitats have potential to support rare species.

Game Species

There are over 500,000 acres of lands available for public hunting, trapping and fishing in the four-county region surrounding the properties. Hunting is allowed on all undeveloped public property. Common species in the area include American black bear, American beaver, North American river otter, fisher, bobcat, ruffed grouse, American woodcock, white-tailed deer, and many duck species.

Bird Species - Resident and Migratory

The large peatlands provide important habitat for boreal birds. Resident species include yellow rail, LeConte’s sparrow, American bittern, northern harrier, palm warbler, Lincoln’s sparrow, sedge wren and Wilson’s snipe.

The St. Croix River corridor receives heavy use by migratory birds during the spring and fall. Resident birds along the river include bald eagle, red-shouldered hawk, great blue heron, and many neotropical passerines.

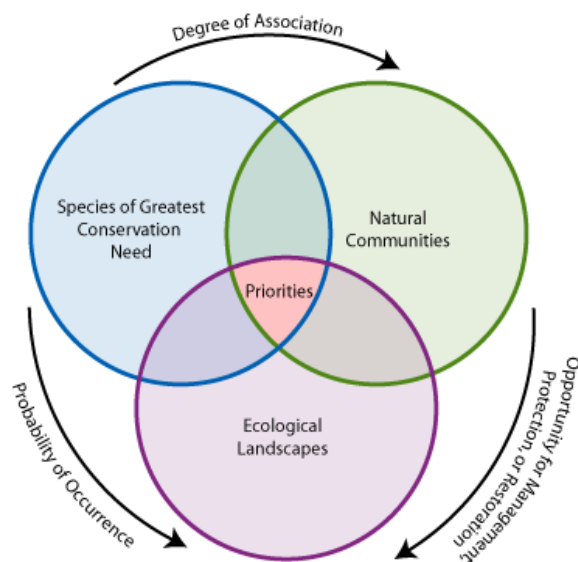


Figure 3.1. Factors influencing ecological priorities.

This area often has an influx of birds in winter that typically inhabit more northerly areas, including great gray owl, boreal owl, northern hawk owl, and gyrfalcon.

The Important Bird Area known as Moose Junction Peatlands is managed for forest production and recreation by Douglas County, and includes three State Natural Areas. Its habitat supports Wisconsin's core golden-winged warbler population.

Ecologically Important Sites

Primary Sites

"Primary Sites" are identified during the Rapid Ecological Assessment (REA) process and included in REA reports prepared by the department (NHC program) for special consideration during the master planning process. Primary Sites encompass the best examples of: rare and representative natural communities; and documented rare species populations with opportunities for restoration or connections. Primary sites warrant high protection and/or restoration. All Primary Sites can be considered High Conservation Value Forests for purposes of Forest Certification.

REAs help summarize projects that collected biological inventory information about DNR properties. They document and help evaluate potential habitat for rare species and identify natural community management opportunities. These reports are accessible to the public via the department's webpage.

Existing NHI data are often the starting point for conducting this biotic inventory to support master planning. Rapid taxa surveys are limited in scope and focus on documenting high quality natural communities, rare plants, breeding birds, herptiles, and, for some properties, aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates. The collective results from these surveys are used to identify ecologically important areas (Primary Sites) on the properties.

Survey locations are identified or guided by using recent aerial photos, USGS 7.5' topographic maps, various Geographic Information System (GIS) sources, information from past survey efforts, discussions with property managers, and the expertise of biologists who are familiar with the properties or with similar habitats in the region. Based on property location and ecological setting, inventory considerations include the identification of high quality forests and other upland and wetland communities, with the potential to support rare species. Private lands surrounding the properties are not surveyed. All Primary Sites can be considered High Conservation Value Forests for the purpose of Forest Certification.

For information about primary sites on properties with current NR 44-approved plans, see the 'completed master plans' tab on the DNR master plan web page, and open the property-specific master plan.

Primary Sites for properties specifically being updated in this 2018 plan are listed below.

- Hoover Lake SNA (project boundary only)

Land Legacy Report Sites

The Land Legacy Report (Pohlman, Bartlet, Hanson III, Scott, & Thompson, 2006) was designed to identify Wisconsin's most important conservation and recreation needs for the next 50 years. The St. Croix River is considered a "Legacy Place" and received the highest ranking (5 stars), implying that if restoration efforts are needed for the area, conservation actions would have a high likelihood of long-term success.

Conservation Opportunity Areas

The Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015b) identifies Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA) in Wisconsin that contain ecological features, natural communities, and/or Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) habitat.

These are areas for which Wisconsin has a unique responsibility for protecting, when viewed from the global, continental, upper Midwest, or state perspective.

- Northwest Lowlands Bogs COA is of Upper-Midwest/Regional significance for a continuum from Open Bog, Northern Sedge Meadow, Poor Fen, Muskeg, and Northern Wet Forest.
- Upper St. Croix River COA: This COA is of Upper-Midwest/Regional significance is one of the best areas nationwide to manage for globally rare pine barrens and associated species like sharp-tailed grouse, upland sandpiper, and Connecticut warbler.
- St. Croix Ridge COA: This COA of upper-Midwest significance

Important Bird Area

One Important Bird Area, known as Moose Junction Peatlands (Steele, 2007), in this landscape provides critical sites for the conservation and management of Wisconsin's birds. This area is managed for forest production and recreation by Douglas County, and includes three State Natural Areas. The habitat supports Wisconsin's core golden-winged warbler population.

Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters

These officially designated waters (ch. NR 102.11 Wis. Admin. Code) provide outstanding recreational opportunities, support valuable fish and wildlife habitat, have good water quality, are not significantly impacted by human activities, and are recognized as being the highest quality waters in the state. Outstanding Resource Waters comprise less than one percent of over 15,000 rivers, lakes and waterbodies in WI; they typically do not have any point sources discharging pollutants directly to the water (for instance, no industrial sources or municipal sewage treatment plants) and no increases of pollutant levels are allowed. If a waterbody has existing point sources at the time of designation, it is more likely to be designated as an Exceptional Resource Water. There are *many* ORW or ERW waters (46 total) in the Northwest Lowlands EL (WDNR, 2016). Examples include:

Outstanding Resource Waters

- Upper St. Croix Lake
- St. Croix River
- Spruce River

Exceptional Resource Waters

- Empire Creek

Wetland Gem Designated Sites

The Wisconsin Wetlands Association identifies four high-quality sites in the Northwest Lowlands as "Wetland Gems" in its publication, Wisconsin Wetland Gems (Wisconsin Wetland Association, 2018). The gems within this region (none of which are on DNR properties) are:

- Belden Swamp
- Black Lake Bog
- Empire Swamp
- Erickson Creek Peatlands

RECREATION CONSIDERATIONS

DNR has engaged in several efforts to assess the recreational needs of Wisconsin. The SCORP analyzes at the statewide status of all outdoor recreation. The ROA is a more specific assessment, focused on eight regions throughout the state. The ROA draws from SCORP data, along with survey data, in creating its recommendations for the region, thus, considerations for recreation in this section are taken directly from the ROA report.

The Northwest Lowlands falls within the broader Great Northwest ROA region. The ROA for the Great Northwest lists the following activities as priorities for future recreation development, shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 High Priority Future Recreation Demands for the Great Northwest ROA Region

High Priority Activities		
ATV/UTV riding	Camping - primitive	Four-wheel vehicle driving
Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding	Canoeing or kayaking	Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
Bicycling - mountain biking/off-road biking	Fishing - lake fishing from a boat, canoe or kayak	Hunting - big game
Bird or wildlife watching	Fishing - lake fishing from shore or a pier	Motorboating (waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
Camping - developed	Fishing - stream or river fishing from shore or wading	Off-highway motorcycle riding

The recreation priorities in Table 3.3 were considered in the planning process for Northwest Lowlands properties. The public access sites and state habitat areas of the region accommodate many of the high priority public use activities noted in Table 3.3. Given the small size and number of DNR properties in Northwest Lowlands, not all recreation priorities are able to be accommodated. However, recreational activities are not limited to DNR lands. Other conservation lands in the area may be better suited to hosting recreational opportunities. Additionally, many of the recreational opportunities not offered in this region are available on DNR property in neighboring regions.

Additional Public Conservation Lands in the Northwest Lowlands

Few DNR-owned properties occur in the Northwest Lowlands. While this master plan applies to DNR-owned properties, other public conservation lands exist in the region. To properly examine the scope of recreation activities in the Northwest Lowlands, department lands were considered in the context of recreational opportunity on other public lands. Thus, this regional analysis considers available opportunity on lands open to the public that are not owned by DNR when addressing recreational challenges and opportunities in the Northwest Lowlands. Prominent public conservation lands in the Northwest Lowlands serving the public's recreational needs, but not included in this planning effort are noted here.

State Trails in Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape

Several State Trails exist or connect within the NWL ecological landscape. These trails are former railroad corridors converted into public recreational trails. The following trails are managed for public recreational uses by the counties they occur in through a partnership agreement with the DNR Parks and Recreation Management program.

- Gandy Dancer State Trail - Douglas, Burnett, & Polk counties
- Wild Rivers State Trail - Douglas, Washburn, & Barron counties

The North Country National Scenic Trail is both a National Scenic Trail and a State Trail. It is managed by the National Park Service, through partnership with DNR, county and local governments and the North Country Trail Association.

County Properties in Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape

County-owned lands within the NWL Ecological Landscape provide significant opportunities for public recreation that are complementary to state-owned (DNR) lands. County agencies managing lands for conservation and public use purposes within the Northwest Lowlands include:

- Douglas County Forestry, Parks & Recreation – approximately 175,000 acres
- Burnett County Forests & Parks – approximately 17,000 acres

Federal Properties in Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape

The St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is approximately 19,000 acres managed by the National Park Service. It crosses into adjacent planning regions.

Chapter 4 : Analysis of Impacts

INTRODUCTION

This analysis discloses the environmental impacts, both positive and negative, of the management actions recommended in this master plan to decision-makers and the public. It focuses on the actions that are new or otherwise represent changes to the current management, development and use of the property. Based on the information presented in this master plan, the proposed actions are anticipated to have many net beneficial environmental effects and are not anticipated to cause significant adverse environmental effects.

IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

In general, impacts to the natural resources of the Northwest Lowlands will be minimal. The properties are small and will primarily be passively managed, limiting the potential for impacts from management actions. This section describes the impacts that may occur to the natural resources of the region.

SOILS

Impacts to soils resulting from the management actions in this plan are expected to be minimal. Soil erosion is not anticipated due to the heavily forested nature of the landscape. Construction of new parking areas or water access points has the most potential to cause erosion. The use of construction best management practices (BMPs), as required in department guidelines, will limit the potential for erosion. Other management will continue to encourage native vegetative cover which may enhance soil health.

GEOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND LANDFORMS

The management in this plan will have minimal to no impact on geologic resources. The small amount of acreage included in this plan and the lack of significant geological features on the properties ensures this.

AIR QUALITY

Impacts to air quality will be limited. Prescribed burns have the potential to impact air quality, but will occur, if at all, on an extremely limited basis on these properties. Local landowners and units of government will be notified prior to management burns. DNR burn plans contain best management practices and procedures to safely manage the fire and includes measures to minimize nuisance smoke, further minimizing impacts.

Vehicle emissions generated by motor vehicles and motorized equipment used in management activities, such as timber harvesting, will be minimal, much less than that from traffic on adjacent roadways and agricultural activities in the area.

WATER RESOURCES

Maintaining permanent vegetative cover on the properties will have a positive impact on both surface waters and wetlands. The impacts of stormwater runoff during any management activity will be mitigated by implementing appropriate best management practices. Few impervious surfaces exist on these properties, limiting runoff during most weather events.

VEGETATION

Vegetation management strategies in this master plan, described in Chapter Two, are intended to maintain or improve the quality of native and restored habitats. All vegetation management in this plan is primarily to enhance aesthetics or habitat. Given the limited nature of department properties in this plan, little major vegetation management is likely to occur. Vegetation management that does occur will follow standard department practices found in the Common Elements for Habitats and their Management and for General Property Management.

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

The actions proposed in this master plan will have positive impacts on resident and migratory wildlife. The habitat management activities will enhance the quality and extent of habitat for wildlife. The management objectives and prescriptions outlined in Chapter Two will maintain the diverse forest, wetland, shrub, and aquatic habitats needed by the game and non-game wildlife populations found on the Northwest Lowlands properties. The proposed management will strive to maintain and enhance hunting and fishing opportunities through maintaining and enhancing high quality waters and habitats and maintaining property access.

ENDANGERED, THREATENED AND RARE SPECIES, NATIVE COMMUNITIES AND SCARCE ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The proposed management objectives and prescriptions are expected to cause few, if any, negative impacts to endangered, threatened and rare species while yielding medium to long-term benefits. Protection, maintenance, or enhancement of the important native communities and unique habitats on the Northwest Lowlands properties will continue to provide benefits to a wide range of rare, threatened or endangered resident and migratory species.

VISUAL/SCENIC RESOURCES

Few, if any, impacts are anticipated on the visual and scenic resources of the Northwest Lowlands. An increase in visual quality may be seen in some areas, particularly state-owned islands, as the master plan describes management primarily for aesthetics.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

TIMBER PRODUCTS

Timber production as part of sustainable forest management is limited in this plan, primarily due to the small amount of acreage in the plan. If it does occur, timber production has value and provides multiple benefits, including employment in forest-based industries and habitat sustainability.

TRANSPORTATION

Traffic on public highways due to proposed management activities are not expected to change from the current, minimal, level.

NOISE

Noise impacts from management activities are anticipated to continue to be minimal on property neighbors and users. Noise from boats or vehicles using public access sites will be minimal. Other potential noise impacts would be generated primarily from land management, forestry and construction and maintenance activities. Such noise will be generated by chainsaws, skidders, machinery, and trucks. These noises will occur primarily during daylight hours and will not be continuous in nature. The noise will be seasonal and transient (i.e., once the activity is completed the noise source will be eliminated).

PUBLIC SAFETY

There are no management elements of the Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan that are anticipated to have a negative effect on public safety. Designated use areas (such as parking lots) are inspected semi-annually to locate and remove hazards. Safety precautions are taken when using herbicides, pesticides, fire, and in other property management activities. Any prescribed burns will follow DNR safety and burn procedures.

LAND USE

The proposed plan continues overall conditions and management strategies that have been in place on the properties. Therefore, minimal impacts on land use are anticipated.

ECONOMIC EFFECTS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of the proposed plan is not likely to generate significant economic impact. Limited forest management on the property may contribute to the local logging industry. Tourism and related industries may benefit slightly from implementation of this plan as people are drawn to the access provided to natural resources in the region by department properties.

Fiscal Effects on Local Government

This plan is not anticipated to generate any change in the fiscal effects on local government expenses or revenues. State law requires the department to make payments in lieu of property taxes (PILT) to ensure the affected town's property base is not adversely affected. There are two separate state statutes, and several formulas under each, that dictate the amount of these payments.

- Wisconsin Statute 70.113 applies to land acquired by the department prior to January 1, 1992. Payments under this statute are made directly to the taxation district in which the land is located.
- Wisconsin Statute 70.114 governs PILT for all lands purchased by the department after January 1, 1992. This law has been amended several times so the specific formula used to determine individual payments varies depending on when the property was acquired and how it was acquired.

The department uses an automated process for collecting information and calculating PILT payments. The process is determined by statute with little room for interpretation or calculation by the department. For further details, please refer to the applicable state statutes or visit the department web site at <http://dnr.wi.gov/> and perform a search for "Payment in Lieu of Taxes".

IMPACTS ON ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Due to the limited amount of infrastructure development and renovation proposed, no significant impacts to energy consumption are expected.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS, RISK AND PRECEDENT

The short and long-term cumulative impacts of this plan are anticipated to be positive. Access to natural resources will remain at its current levels and may increase modestly. Land management will largely remain static, limiting new impacts.

Management of the Northwest Lowlands properties poses a low overall potential for risk to the environment. Proposed habitat management activities are similar to those used over the last several decades. A small percentage of the total Northwest Lowlands property acreage, if any, will be actively managed a given year limiting impact potential.

The presence of motor vehicles and other equipment during parking area or water access construction or land management activities may pose a slight but insignificant risk from spills and erosion. These risks will be mitigated by best management practice requirements. Herbicide/pesticide use will strictly follow label instructions to protect the environment and public safety.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PRECEDENT

Approval of this master plan revision would not directly influence future decisions on other department property master plans. Implementation of the actions contained in this master plan would not be precedent-setting, primarily because the proposed land management, development, and recreational activities have largely been conducted on these properties in the past.

WEPA COMPLIANCE

Property planning under Ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code, is an integrated analysis action under NR 150.20(2) (a)1., Wis. Admin Code, and therefore complies with the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA), s. 1.11, Stats.

Chapter 5 : Analysis of Alternatives

The Northwest Lowlands contains comparatively few properties to other planning regions. The resource assessment of these properties that the department conducted prior to initiating the master planning process for the Northwest Lowland Regional Master Plan determined that overall current land management objectives and actions on the properties were appropriate and should generally be continued. No new resource management objectives (alternative management purposes) were identified for consideration in the planning process.

During the planning process the planning team evaluated the assessment data and determined the most appropriate actions for protecting and perpetuating high-value resources and general habitats, and recreational environments. This proposed regional master plan maintains the overall current resource and recreation management focus on each property. Most properties will be managed primarily according to the standard department management practices described in the Common Elements for Management of Department Properties. Thus, the planning team did not consider any significant land management alternatives.

Chapter 6 : Summary of the Public Involvement Process and Input Received

Public input during the master planning process took place in two distinct processes. The first, during the plan's scoping phase, sought public input regarding use of the properties of the region. This first public involvement phase helps the planning team understand the public's use of the properties and aids in setting the scope of the plan.

The second phase took place following the department's release of the draft regional master plan. This chapter was updated following the public's review of the draft regional master plan.

INITIAL PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

The initial public involvement phase for master planning properties within the Northwest Lowlands was open from March 27 to May 3, 2018. The purpose of the initial public involvement phase was to notify the public regarding the department's intent to plan for properties in the region and to identify management and use issues to be evaluated during the planning process. The department followed the Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan's Public Involvement Plan. The public input processes for the Northwest Sands and Superior Coastal Plain ecological landscape regional master plans occurred concurrently with the Northwest Lowlands. Two open houses were held and an online public input form was available for the public to submit their input. Three responses were received regarding the Northwest Lowlands. Of those, one offered a written response in favor of protecting water quality in the area by limiting uses. No other comments were received.

DRAFT REGIONAL MASTER PLAN REVIEW PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

The Northwest Lowlands Draft Regional Master Plan was released for public review on December 6, 2019. A press release was posted to the department website and distributed to media in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Burnett, Washburn and surrounding counties. The news release was also sent to the email distribution list, which contains over 4,600 subscribers. The public meeting was advertised at the Spooner DNR Service Center and at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center. Several local media outlets also ran stories informing the public of the opportunity to give input.

The draft plan was posted to the Northwest Lowlands master planning webpage. Individual sections of the plan were also available for download. The department provided an interactive map for the public to view the properties in the context of the ecological landscape, read a brief description of the plan, and access property-specific sections of the plan. Public meetings were held December 17 and 18, 2019 at the DNR Spooner Service Center and the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland respectively. Six members of the public attended the Spooner meeting and 13 attended the Ashland meeting.

Public input on the Northwest Lowlands Draft Regional Master Plan was limited. This is likely due to the limited DNR lands in the region. Those comments that were received requested consideration of additional street-legal, four-wheel drive vehicle trails on department lands.



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APPENDIX A: PROPERTIES OF THE NORTHWEST LOWLANDS

Properties included in this master plan for the Northwest Lowlands Ecological Landscape planning region are under a variety of administrative property designations. Table A.1 lists all properties in this plan. All properties in Table A.1 will have NR 44-compliant plans and be included in subsequent updates of this Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan upon approval of this proposed plan.

Table A.1. Properties of the Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan

Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan**	Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
		DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
Alabama Lake State Habitat Area	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Existing Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Lake Nebagamon State Habitat Area*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Existing Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Nimon Lake State Public Access*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Existing Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Round Lake State Habitat Area*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Existing Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Big Trade Lake - Island No. 1*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Existing Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification

Appendix A: Properties of the Northwest Lowlands

		Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan**	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Big Trade Lake - Island No. 2*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Little McGraw Lake - Island No. 1*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Dollar Island*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Little Island*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Tomahawk Island*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification



Appendix A: Properties of the Northwest Lowlands

		Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan**	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Steele Lake - Island No. 1*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Steele Lake - Island No. 2*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 1*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 2*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 3*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification

Appendix A: Properties of the Northwest Lowlands

		Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan**	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 4*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Trade Lake Public Access*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Twin Lake Public Access Laketown*	Northwest Lowlands Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification

**The proposed name for this property is shown in the Table A.1. Please see Table B.2 for the current property name.



APPENDIX B: REAL ESTATE ACTION TABLES

Table B.1. Overview of Real Estate Recommendations for the Northwest Lowlands Region

Property Name (Acquisition Authority)	Fee Title Acres (Statewide)	Easement Acres (Statewide)	Existing Project Boundary (Acres)	Proposed Project Boundary (Acres)	Changes in Project Boundary (Acres)	Existing Acquisition Goal (Acres)	Proposed Acquisition Goal (Acres)	Changes in Acquisition Goal (Acres)	Existing Percent Complete	Parcel Redesignations	Proposed Land Sale (Acres)
GOVERNOR KNOWLES STATE FOREST	21,084.38	76.97	47,591.84	47,591.86	0.02	30,175.00	30,190.57	15.57	70%	15.49	
REM-LAKE NEBAGAMON*	40.00	0.00	NA	NA	NA	0.00	0.00	-40.00	>100%	-40.00	
REM-NIMON LAKE*	5.00	0.00	NA	NA	NA	0.00	0.00	-5.00	>100%	-5.00	
REM-ROUND LAKE*	23.70	0.00	NA	NA	NA	0.00	0.00	-23.70	>100%	-23.70	
ST CROIX RIVER PUBLIC ACCESS	15.40	0.09	NA	NA	NA	15.57	0.00	-15.57	99%	-15.49	
TRADE LAKE PUBLIC ACCESS	1.50	0.00	NA	NA	NA	1.50	1.50	0.00	100%		
TWIN LAKE PUBLIC ACCESS LAKETOWN	6.12	0.00	NA	NA	NA	6.12	6.12	0.00	100%		
STATE OWNED ISLANDS	1,849.97	0.00	NA	NA	NA	1,180.99	1,180.99	0.00	157%		
STATEWIDE NATURAL AREA	29,393.52	5,911.54	NA	NA	NA	41,110.50	41,110.50	0.00	71%		
STATEWIDE PUBLIC ACCESS	1,188.98	34.58	NA	NA	NA	768.72	773.72	5.00	155%	5.00	
STATEWIDE WILDLIFE HABITAT	4,244.40	1,334.85	NA	NA	NA	6,000.00	5,988.50	-11.50	71%	-139.60	
HABITAT AREA	18.07	0.00	NA	NA	NA	5,184.33	5,259.53	75.20	0%	203.30	

*The acquisition goal for this property will first be established to match the current Fee Title Ownership. The acquisition goal will then be transferred to another acquisition authority leaving the current acquisition authority's acquisition goal at 0 acres.

Table B.2. Scattered Department Property Naming Summary Table for the Northwest Lowlands Region

Proposed Name	Existing Acquisition Authority/Name	Existing Administrative Owner	Proposed Administrative Owner		Proposed Redesignation (if Changed)	Acreage	County	Map Reference	Fee/Easement
Alabama Lake State Habitat Area	Statewide Wildlife Habitat	Wildlife	Wildlife		Habitat Area	11.50	Polk	AD	Fee
	Statewide Wildlife Habitat	Wildlife				128.10			Easement
Lake Nebagamon State Habitat Area	REM-Lake Nebagamon	Fish	Fish		Habitat Area	40.00	Douglas	AA	Fee
Nimon Lake State Public Access	REM-Nimon Lake	Fish	Fish		Statewide Public Access	5.00	Polk	AB	Fee
Round Lake State Habitat Area	REM-Round Lake	Fish	Fish		Habitat Area	23.70	Burnett	AC	Fee
State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Little McGraw Lake - Island No. 1	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			0.04	Burnett	AE	Fee
State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Big Trade Lake - Island No. 1	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			0.30	Burnett	AF	Fee
State Owned Islands - Burnett County - Big Trade Lake - Island No. 2	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			1.30	Burnett	AF	Fee
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Dollar Island	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			0.05	Douglas	AG	Fee
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Little Island	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			0.60	Douglas	AG	Fee
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Amnicon Lake - Tomahawk Island	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			24.00	Douglas	AG	Fee
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Steele Lake - Island No. 1	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			1.50	Douglas	AH	Fee
State Owned Islands - Douglas County - Steele Lake - Island No. 2	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			0.60	Douglas	AH	Fee
State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 1	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			0.70	Polk	AI	Fee
State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 2	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			17.40	Polk	AI	Fee
State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 3	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry			0.30	Polk	AI	Fee
State Owned Islands - Polk County - Alabama Lake - Island No. 4	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry		1.00	Polk	AI		Fee